

CONNECTICUT Land Conservation Council

Testimony House Bill No. 5312, Section 6
Transportation Committee

Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Esq., Executive Director
Connecticut Land Conservation Council

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Co-Chairs Guerra, Leone, and Boucher, Ranking Member Carney, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) in opposition to **Section 6 of H.B. 5312, AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES REGARDING THE MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES.**

As the State's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, including its 137+ land trusts, CLCC advocates for land conservation, stewardship, and funding, and works to ensure the long-term strength and viability of the land conservation community in Connecticut.

CLCC submits this testimony in connection with H.B. 5312, Section 6 (b), which impacts the "Passport to the Parks" -- a new program created by the state biennial budget adopted last year that is intended to generate dedicated revenues to support the operation and maintenance of our State Parks. Supported through a \$10 fee that is being applied through the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles to registration of non-commercial vehicles, the Passport to the Parks provides Connecticut residents access to all state parks for free, while helping to restore and support park services such as campgrounds, lifeguards and hours of operation at certain parks and nature centers. We note that Section 6 (a) impacts the federal Clean Air Act fee which is collected by DMV to help cover DEEP costs incurred in implementing the federal Clean Air Act.

CLCC is concerned that Section 6 of H.B. 5312 eliminates the existing provisions that prohibit refunds of the fees for both the Passport to the Parks and the Clean Air Act fee programs, potentially undermining the respective fee structures and disrupting the dedicated funding streams for both programs. Please remove Section 6 from H.B. 5312.

On behalf of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, I thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

